



SPOTTED LANTERNFLY UPDATE

The invasive spotted lanternfly certainly made its presence known in the Harrisburg area over the summer. Eggs began hatching early last May, and throughout the summer, the insects have grown from small black nymphs with white spots to red, black and white-winged adults. Spotted lanternflies feed on the sap of many trees and other plants, but their preferred food is the Tree of Heaven or Ailanthus. They also seem like red maple, silver maple, black walnut, sumac, and grapevines.

So, what to do?

This time of year, you can swat them with a fly swatter or vacuum them up. You can apply insecticidal soap or neem oil to bark, branches, and foliage where they are feeding. Scraping egg masses off into a container of alcohol or hand sanitizer may reduce the number of insects that hatch near you. Later in the winter, applying dormant oil to egg masses will smother them.

If you have a tree of heaven nearby, and plan to get rid of its next year. It's essential to use an herbicide to kill the tree first and then remove it. Simply cutting a live tree of heaven down will only multiply the problem, as it will sprout prolifically from the roots.

When the insects begin hatching late next spring, be prepared with flypaper and circle traps to capture the insects or insecticidal soap to kill them. By mid-summer, stronger chemicals can be used to treat a particular tree where there's a heavy infestation of spotted lanternflies.

See Penn State Extension's website for excellent written material and instructional videos on managing spotted lanternflies: <https://extension.psu.edu/spotted-lanternfly>.